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BOOK REVIEWS



FLOWERS AND FERNS IN THEIR HAUNTS. By Mabel Osgood Wright. The Macmillan Company, New York.

The nurse who is temporarily at sea, wondering what to read aloud to the patient who needs amusement of a tranquil nature, cannot do better, in nine cases out of ten, than to send for this charming book, divided into such topics as "The Coming of Spring," "Along the Waterways," "In Silent Woods," "The Drapery of Vines," "The Fantasies of Ferns," and other enticing considerations. The illustrations are of great beauty and variety.

Not only adults, but also children who are old enough to know and care for flowers, will be happily brought through an otherwise dull afternoon by judicious selections from these most attractive pages.

THE AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMAN. By John Howard Cromwell, Ph.B., LL.B. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London.

Nothing impresses on one's mind more vividly the vast change which one century or, indeed, one-half of a century, has brought about in the position and circumstances of women than a perusal of this volume. To read over, for instance, Frederika Bremer's "The Four Sisters," a novel of family life in Sweden, with its picture of the complete and humiliating financial and economic dependence of women in the early part of this century, and then to turn to a study of this book of instruction to women upon the management of property, gives a sense of contrast so extreme as to be almost incredible. "The American Business Woman" is a volume of four hundred pages, most carefully and conservatively written by a lawyer whose character and attainments have evidently placed him in the position of adviser to many women, few of whom had had previous training in business-like methods.

The author says in his preface: ". . . No one fact has been more strongly impressed upon me than that the majority of American women are almost entirely ignorant of the ordinary rules and methods of business. . . . This lack of knowledge among women is not at all due to any natural deficiency (on the contrary, . . . women are quick to learn business methods when properly instructed), but it is rather the inevitable result of existing circumstances and conditions. We cannot reasonably look for a contrary state of affairs when we reflect that for ages women have been trained and educated in almost everything except the principles of business, and have been instructed, if not compelled, to leave all matters of business to their fathers, husbands, or brothers. . . . Many a woman who has been left in comfortable circumstances . . . has been reduced to poverty and want because, through lack of education in matters of business, she has been compelled to rely on the judgment of others, whose advice, though perhaps honestly given, has been the worst possible. . . . There is no proper reason why a woman who is possessed of property shall not thoroughly understand and practise the approved methods by which only it may be wisely invested and preserved. Such knowledge, modestly applied, comport